

School Transportation

School Bus Purchase Program

FAQs – Update 06/10/15

School Bus Purchase Report (EF-T-20) (A District Submittal)

When will NEO Transportation be available?

NEO Transportation launched November 1, 2013. Updates and refinements are implemented as needed.

When is training available?

Classroom training is provided each year at the annual State School Transportation Conference. It typically occurs during the **3rd week in July** at the Sugarloaf Conference Center, Carrabassett Valley, Maine. Watch for an announcement during the summer that will be posted in the Maine DOE News. All school Transportation Directors should attend.

What is it?

The **School Bus Purchase Report** is one of 6 steps (request a bus, receive approval, report the bus purchase, report a bus approval cancellation, submit the safety and training annual data report, and submit the vehicle annual data report) required to participate in the Maine School Bus Purchase Program. The School Bus Purchase Report is submitted to the Maine DOE by school districts and schools that receive state funds. The School Bus Purchase Report confirms that the district purchased and received a new school bus during the fiscal year (FY) that the state approved the purchase. A report is required for each new school bus purchase. The report provides data on delivery, acceptance, and financing of a new bus and retirement of the bus that is being replaced if the approval was based on a bus replacement. The report is required in order to receive subsidy.

When is it due?

Each year the School Bus Purchase Report is due during the business quarter that the district takes possession of the new school bus. The report due dates for each business quarter are:
Q1 – September 30; Q2 – December 31; Q3 – March 31; and Q4 – June 30.

Where is the report located?

There are 2 locations for the report. The location depends on whether the bus was approved for purchase by the state or not. For a new bus purchase that was **approved** by the state, the School Bus Purchase Report is located in the NEO Transportation system under the “**Bus Purchase**” tab. Select “**Add Approved Vehicle to Inventory.**” For a new bus purchase that was **not approved** by the state, the report is located under the “**Vehicle Inventory**” tab. Click “**Add Vehicle to Inventory.**”

How is a report completed?

There are 2 ways to complete and submit a School Bus Purchase Report:

- Option 1 – Bus purchased after a State approval was received
- Option 2 – Bus purchased without State approval (and not sold to another district)
- Option 3 – Bus purchased from a different school district

Option 1 – Bus purchased after a State approval was received – Open your “**Bus Purchase**” tab. Select “**Add Approved Vehicle to Inventory.**” You must use this process in order to receive funding. There are two (2) stages to submit your School Bus Purchase Report for a bus that was approved by the state:

- Stage 1 – financial data entry completed by the **Business Manager**
- Stage 2 – bus data entry completed by the **Transportation Director**

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Stage 1 – NEO Transportation is designed for the Business Manager to make the first entry (stage 1). Open your **“Bus Purchase”** tab. Select **“Add Approved Vehicle to Inventory.”** Enter information in all cells. Date of possession means the date the district actually received (took possession of) the bus. After you answer the financial questions and upload your new bus documents you can save the information as a draft (in case you need to collect more information and come back to finish the entry) or you can submit the report. After you submit, you will find the bus listed in your **“Vehicle Inventory.”** Click the **“Status”** dropdown (near the top middle page) and choose either **“new”** or **“draft.”** If you saved your original entry as draft you will find the entry under **“Draft”** status and you will need to complete your entries. If you completed your original entry you will find the entry under **“New”** status. We recommend that the Business Manager send an email to the Transportation Director when **“Stage 1”** is complete.

NOTE 1: Increasing the number of payment years – The payment type and payment years shown on your bus approval are what the district requested at the time of application (EFT-17). Districts may increase the number of payment years, e.g., if a district requested a 3 year term payment the district may change to a 5 year term payment. The business manager will need to record the change when entering the new bus purchase report (EFT-20) in NEO. Follow the directions above for Stage 1, enter the actual payment years and upload the financial documents that confirm the term payment. School bus purchase report (EFT-20) changes should be recorded in NEO during the week that the district takes possession of the bus.

NOTE 2: Decreasing the number of payment years – The payment type and payment years shown on your bus approval are what the district requested at the time of application (EFT-17). If a district decreases the number of payment years, e.g., a bus purchase approval was received for 5, 4, 3, or 2 year term payments and a district changes the term payment to 1 year or any number of years less than the original approval then the total district approval amount will be reduced. If the approval was for 5 years with a maximum approval of \$20K per year and the term was changed to 1 year then the maximum approval would change to 1 year at \$20K – not \$20K per year for 5 years.

Stage 2 – After the Business Manager completes the financial entries (Stage 1) then the Transportation Director completes the bus data entries (Stage 2). If the Transportation Director tries to enter data *before* the financial data is entered by the Business Manager then the Transportation Director will receive a **“denied access”** message. To complete the School Bus Purchase Report (EFT-20), go to your **“Vehicle Inventory.”** Change the **“Status”** (which is located near the top of the page under **“SAU Name”**) to **“Select.”** You will find the new bus listed in your inventory. The status will be listed as **“New.”** Under the **“Navigation”** click the **“Select Link”** down arrow and choose **“Complete Inventory.”** Answer the questions. When you are finished, click **“Place in Service.”** The status of the bus will automatically change from **“New”** to **“In Service.”** That completes the school bus purchase report (EFT-20) for the bus.

If the bus purchase entry is recorded incorrectly (using the **“Add Vehicle to Inventory”** tab instead of **“Add Approved Vehicle to Inventory”**), then the system will not recognize the purchase and not assign funding. **This is important!** You must follow the correct entry process.

Option 2 – Bus purchased without State approval (and not sold to another district) – Open your **“Vehicle Inventory”** tab. Select **“Add Vehicle to Inventory.”** This is where you enter a bus purchased without

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state approval, e.g., a bus the district purchased without applying to the School Bus Purchase Program. Enter information in all the cells. Date of possession means the date the district actually received the bus. Click on the **“Add Vehicle”** button that is located in the lower left of the screen.

Option 3 – Bus purchased from a different school district – There are 2 stages to transfer a bus from one district to another. Stage 1 is about sending the bus to the new district. Stage 2 is about the new district receiving the bus after stage 1 is complete. For more details see the **FAQs** for **“Bus Ownership Transfer to A different District.”**

Who has access to the report?

The district superintendent, business manager and transportation director have access to the School Bus Purchase Report.

Where are instructions located?

Instructions are included in the NEO Transportation detailed **“FAQs”** documents for each report. Once the NEO system edits are completed we will post instructions in the NEO Transportation system.

How do I certify my report before it is submitted?

At this time, there is no certification required for this report.

How do I confirm that the report was submitted?

Districts can confirm submittal of their School Bus Purchase Report by selecting the **“Vehicle Inventory”** tab and clicking on **“Vehicle Inventory.”** If the report submittal was completed then the new bus will be listed in the bus inventory.

Who do I contact for assistance?

Contact the MEDMS Helpdesk at medms.helpdesk@maine.gov for your password or technical issues associated with access to NEO Transportation.

Contact Pat Hinckley at pat.hinckley@maine.gov for details about the content of the report

Contact your district IT department and the MEDMS Helpdesk (at medms.helpdesk@maine.gov) if you have technical difficulty with the NEO system.

What Maine statute and rule govern the School Bus Purchase Program?

The statute is Title 20-A, sections 5401 and 5402. The rule is 05-071 chapter 81. See the Maine DOE School Transportation website: <http://www.maine.gov/doe/transportation/laws/>

What is the website link to the Maine DOE School Transportation page? <http://www.maine.gov/doe/transportation/>